

# Clifton News

287 October - December 2019

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On Tuesday 30th July **Dan Girrad** married **Jochebed Coelho** at Upwaltham Barns in Chichester. There was a bit of rain but other than that it was a wonderful occasion. We had the joy of welcoming **Jochebed** into fellowship when they returned from their honeymoon in August.



Four of our young people had a great time at the **Kingfisher Christian camp** in Andover in August.



We were able to have our stalls pitched again at the **Grange Picnic in the Park** in July and at the **Thornton Heath Festival** in September and both festivals went well with good weather and good crowds attending. Children enjoyed playing the games we had while parents stopped to chat. A good amount of gospel literature was distributed. The mayor of Croydon stopped by again to say hello. Pray for the Word sown.



A good number were present to witness the baptism of **Roberto Manzi** and **Kiran Patel** on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July. Both are now in fellowship.



On a sadder note, our dear sister **Stacie Thomas** went to be with the Lord just before her 87<sup>th</sup> birthday on 28<sup>th</sup> August. She had been attending Clifton Hall since the 1990s and despite her illness which made it difficult for her to get out often, she was a faithful sister, always cheerful and never complained. Over 160 attended the funeral which was held at South Norwood Baptist Church due to its capacity and the gospel was preached by Nitish Patel to the many unsaved present. The burial was at Queens Road cemetery. Also our sister **Etta Knight's** husband **Henry** died on 30<sup>th</sup> August. The funeral was held on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Pray for the Lord's comfort for Etta, Patricia and the family.

*Carol Service*

Sunday 22nd December at 6:30 pm. Followed by tea and mince pies

**WATCHNIGHT GOSPEL MEETING**

31st December at 11.00 pm

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# Meetings

## Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am  
(During outreach at local community events it is at 10 am)

Young people's Bible class 12.00 pm  
Family Service 4.00 pm

## Monday

Prayer and Bible Teaching 7.45 pm

## Wednesday

Seekers 6.30 pm  
(Term time only for under 10s)

## Friday

Friday Club 7.30 pm

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

### October

6 Mike Surry  
13 Nitish Patel  
20 Andrew Hall  
27 Alastair Rodger

### November

3 Mike Surry  
10 Vincent Khushal  
17 George Rassovsky  
24 Richard Catchpole

### December

1 George Rassovsky  
8 Ferranti Wong  
15 Richard Catchpole  
22 Nitish Patel (Carol Service) at 6.30 pm  
29 Vincent Khushal  
31 Watchnight Gospel Meeting at 11 pm

## MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING

### October

7 Martin Hayward  
14 George Rassovsky  
21 George Rassovsky  
28 Martin Hayward

### November

4 Colin Roberts  
11 Colin Roberts  
18 Timothy Miller  
25 Timothy Miller

### December

2 Roy Aitkin  
9 Roy Aitkin  
16 Richard Catchpole  
23 Richard Catchpole  
30 Richard Catchpole

## SATURDAY MINISTRY MEETINGS

5 October James College (Pamber Heath)  
2 November Mark Lacey (Bath)  
7 December Andrew Logan (Kilburn)

# Question Box



## *When was Jesus born?*

Many people in the world believe that Jesus was born on Christmas Day because that is the day that was historically established as when Christians celebrated the Saviour's birth. However, the Bible does not tell us the exact day Jesus was born. Even King Herod did not know the exact day but worked out that the child was under two years old and slew all the boys he could find up to that age (Matthew 2:16).

We are told that Jesus was born during the reign of August Caesar who reigned from 23 September 63 BC to 19 August AD 14. Cyrenius was governor of Syria (Luke 3:1-2) from 4 BC to 1 BC and Herod the king of Judea (Matthew 2:1). Matthew tells us that Herod died after Jesus was taken to Egypt by Joseph and Mary (Matthew 2:14-20). History reveals that Herod the Great died around 4 BC. We can work out approximately the year Jesus was born from this.

Concerning the month, some have calculated a time around September or October based on the details given about the shift of Zechariah in the Temple, the father of John the Baptist who was Jesus cousin and born six months before the Lord. Zacharias was of the

course of Abia or Abjiah which was the eighth one (1 Chronicles 24:10). But it depends on being sure when Zechariah's shift actually began.

Though we don't know the day Jesus was born, it does say that when Jesus was born, it was at the exact time that God had planned which is important. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." (Galatians 4:4)

Centuries of failure to keep the law by the Jews showed without any doubt that not only they but all need a Saviour. God's timing was perfect for the sending of His Son to be born at Bethlehem. It was the time when the law had done its work and revealed the complete inability of man to keep God's law.

When he was saved, the Apostle Paul realised this. "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Romans 7:14). "... no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." (Galatians 3:11) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3:13).

There are other reasons we can think of as to why the Lord came at this time. Firstly, the Roman Empire had spread across the whole of the Mediterranean world. They built roads right across the empire and established peace by means of their powerful legions. This meant that Jesus disciples could quickly travel everywhere with the message of the gospel and since the time of Alexander the Great whose empire established Greek as the language of the known world, most could understand the gospel. It did not take long for Christianity to spread across the empire and become established. Though we don't know the exact day and month, we can see how perfect was God's timing for the sending of His Son into this world.

*Nitish Patel*



# Bible Teaching



## GOD IN EVERYTHING

*By Charles Henry Mackintosh (1820 - 1896)*

Nothing so much helps the Christian to endure the trials of his path as the habit of seeing God in everything. There is no circumstance, be it ever so trivial or ever so commonplace, which may not be regarded as a messenger from God, if only the ear be circumcised to hear, and the mind spiritual to understand the message. If we lose sight of this valuable truth, life, in many instances at least, will be but a dull monotony, presenting nothing beyond the most ordinary circumstances. On the other hand, if we could but remember, as we start each day on our course, that the hand of our Father can be traced in every scene — if we could see in the smallest, as well as in the most weighty circumstances, traces of the divine presence, how full of deep interest would each day's history be found!

The Book of Jonah illustrates this truth in a very marked way. There we learn, what we need so much to remember, that there is nothing ordinary to the Christian; everything is extraordinary. The most

commonplace things, the simplest circumstances, exhibit in the history of Jonah, the evidences of special interference. To see this instructive feature, it is not needful to enter upon the detailed exposition of the Book of Jonah, we only need to notice one expression, which occurs in it again and again, namely, the Lord prepared."

In chapter one the Lord sends out a great wind into the sea, and this wind had in it a solemn voice for the prophet's ear, had he been wakeful to hear it. Jonah was the one who needed to be taught; for him the messenger was sent forth. The poor pagan mariners, no doubt, had often encountered a storm; to them it was nothing new, nothing special, nothing but what fell to the common lot of seamen; yet it was special and extraordinary for one individual on board, though that one was asleep in the sides of the ship. In vain did the sailors seek to counteract the storm; nothing would avail until the Lord's message had reached the ears of him to whom it was sent. Following Jonah a little further, we perceive another instance of what we may term God in everything. He is brought into new circumstances, yet he is not beyond the reach of the messengers of God. The Christian can never find himself in a position in which his Father's voice cannot reach his ear, or his Father's hand meet his view, for His voice can be heard, His hand seen, in everything. Thus when Jonah had been cast forth into the sea, "the Lord prepared a great fish." Here, too, we see that there is nothing ordinary to the child of God. A great fish was nothing uncommon; there are many such in the sea; yet did the Lord prepare one for Jonah, in order that it might be the messenger of God to his soul.

Again, in chapter four, we find the prophet sitting on the east side of the city of Nineveh, in sullenness and impatience, grieved because the city had not been overthrown and entreating the Lord to take away his life. He would seem to have forgotten the lesson learned during his three days' sojourn in the deep, and he therefore needed a fresh message from God: "And the Lord prepared a gourd." This is very instructive. There was surely nothing uncommon in the mere circumstance of a gourd; other men might see a thousand gourds, and, moreover, might sit beneath their shade, and yet see nothing extraordinary in them. But Jonah's gourd exhibited traces of the hand of God, and forms a link — an important link — in the chain of circumstances through which, according to the design of God, the prophet was passing. The gourd now, like the great fish before, though very different in its kind, was the messenger of God to his soul. "So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." He had before

longed to depart, but his longing was more the result of impatience and chagrin, than of holy desire to depart and be at rest forever. It was the painfulness of the present, rather than the happiness of the future that made him wish to be gone.

This is often the case. We are frequently anxious to get away from present pressure; but if the pressure were removed, the longing would cease. If we longed for the coming of Jesus, and the glory of His blessed presence, circumstances would make no difference; we should then long as ardently to get away from those of pressure and sorrow. Jonah while he sat beneath the shadow of the gourd, thought not of departing, and the very fact of his being "exceeding glad of the gourd" proved how much he needed that special messenger from the Lord; it served to make manifest the true condition of his soul, when he uttered the words, "Take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." The Lord can make even a gourd the instrument for developing the secrets of the human heart.

Truly the Christian can say, God is in everything. The tempest roars, and the voice of God is heard, a gourd springs up in silence, and the hand of God is seen. Yet the gourd was but a link in the chain; for "the Lord prepared a worm, and this worm, trifling as it was when viewed in the light of an instrument, was, nevertheless, as much the divine agent as was the "great wind," or the "great fish." A worm, when used by God, can do wonders; it withered Jonah's gourd, and taught him, as it teaches us, a solemn lesson. True, it was only an insignificant agent, the efficacy of which depended upon its conjunction with others; but this only illustrates the more strikingly the greatness of our Father's mind. He can prepare a worm, and He can prepare a vehement east wind, and make them both, though so unlike, conducive to His great designs.

In a word, the spiritual mind sees God in everything. The worm, the whale, and the tempest, all are instruments in His hand. The most insignificant, as well as the most splendid agents, further His ends. The east wind would not have proved effectual, though it had been ever so vehement, had not the worm first done its appointed work. How striking is all this! Who would have thought that a worm and an east wind could be joint agents in doing a work of God? Yet so it was. Great and small are only terms in use among men, and cannot apply to Him "Who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in heaven," as well as "the things that are on earth." They are all alike to Him "Who sits on the circle of the earth." Jehovah can tell the number of the stars, and while He does so He can take knowledge of a falling

sparrow; He can make the whirlwind His chariot, and a broken heart His dwelling place. Nothing is great or small with God.

The believer, therefore, must not look upon anything as ordinary, for God is in everything. True, he may have to pass through the same circumstances — to meet the same trials — to encounter the same reverses as other men; but he must not meet them in the same way, nor interpret them on the same principle; nor do they convey the same report to his ear. He should hear the voice of God, and heed His message, in the most trifling as well as in the most momentous occurrence of the day. The disobedience of a child, or the loss of an estate, the obliquity of a servant or the death of a friend, should all be regarded as divine messengers to his soul.

So also, when we look around us in the world, God is in everything. The overturning of thrones, the crashing of empires, the famine, the pestilence, and every event that occurs among nations, exhibit traces of the hand of God, and utter a voice for the ear of man. The devil will seek to rob the Christian of the real sweetness of this thought; he will tempt him to think that, at least, the commonplace circumstances of every-day life exhibit nothing extraordinary, but only such as happen to other men. But we must not yield to him in this. We must start on our course every morning, with this truth vividly impressed on our mind — God is in everything. The sun that rolls along the heavens in splendid brilliancy, and the worm that crawls along the path, have both alike been prepared of God, and, moreover, could both alike cooperate in the development of His unsearchable designs.

I would observe, in conclusion, that the only one who walked in the abiding remembrance of the above precious and important truth was our blessed Master. He saw the Master's hand and heard the Father's voice in everything. This appears preeminently in the season of the deepest sorrow. He came forth from the garden of Gethsemane with those memorable words, "The cup which my Father has given me, shall I not drink it?" thus recognising in the fullest manner, that God is in everything.

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# Good News

## ENEMY OF THE STATE

From the writings of the Roman writer Valerius Maximus who worked during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (14AD to 37AD) comes the story of a wealthy slave owner, Urbinius Panapio. Urbinius found himself proscribed meaning he was made an outlaw, an enemy of the state and anyone finding him could put him to death for a handsome reward of 2,500 drachmae.

After the civil war following the murder of Julius Caesar, Octavian Caesar, Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus formed a political alliance on 27<sup>th</sup> November BC 43, known as the Second Triumvirate. All who supported the wrong side, some 2000 individuals were subject to death and confiscation of property by the state. Urbinius was in big trouble since his name was on the list.

Once the order was issued, soldiers came looking for him. The slaves of Urbinius household hoping to receive their freedom or a monetary reward had tipped off the authorities of his whereabouts in his country estate villa in Reate, central Italy.

However, Urbinius was saved by one loyal slave. The slave put on his master's clothes and put on even his master's signet ring. His master was sent out the back door to escape and the slave went into the bedroom and allowed himself to be killed as Panapio. It took remarkable courage to die a violent death at the hands of soldiers hacking with their swords in place of another. Urbinius survived and set up a splendid monument to the slave acknowledging how much he owed to him for saving his life.

The substitutionary death of this slave for his master reminds us of the far greater substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ for us on Calvary's cross. The Bible declares that all of us were enemies of God (Romans 5:10), under the just sentence of death (Romans 5:12) and the wrath of God was upon us (Romans 5:9).

Yet in a love that passeth all knowledge, Jesus, the Son of God took our place. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8). Like the slave, the Lord Jesus not only died as our substitute but also as our representative. He died FOR US and AS US. When God saw Christ on the cross, He saw us paying the penalty for our sin. The sentence of death of carried out and the law of God has no more against those who believe in the Lord Jesus as their risen living Saviour.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans 6:6)

*Himself He could not save  
What wondrous love is this!  
In love Himself He gave,  
There ne'er was love like His!  
Such love should melt a heart of stone  
Till praise flows forth to Him alone*

*(Albert Midlane, 1825-1909)*



## *Design in Creation*



### **THE BOMBARDIER BEETLE**

(Genus Brachinus)

The Bombardier Beetle is the famous beetle that blew up the theory evolution. It's remarkable chemical weapons system is like a biological pulse jet engine coupled with a swivelling 360 degree machine gun. It is a display of the genius of God's design in Creation.

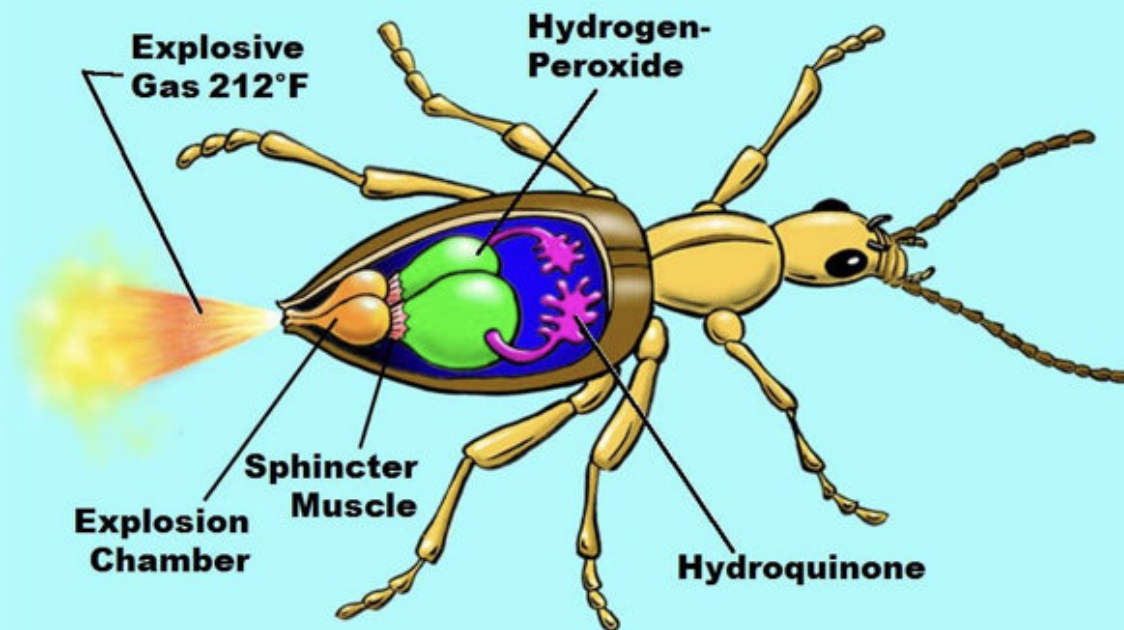
There are some 250 species of bombardier beetle around the world and two of them are very rare in the UK but can be found in the Thames Estuary area up to Margate. These are the Streaked Bombardier Beetle (*Brachinus sclopeta*) and the Common Bombardier Beetle (*Brachinus crepitans*).

In 1961, scientist Dr Schildknecht discovered the chemistry of this beetle's defence mechanism and found that the beetle produced and combined two chemicals hydrogen peroxide and hydroquinone to

produce benzoquinone and water which was stored in a storage chamber. When threatened this beetle had muscles which squeezed the mixture into twin combustion chambers through valves which are opened in the first part of the cycle. Once the reactants were present in the chamber two enzymes catalysts (catalase and peroxidase) were produced from the chamber walls which caused an extremely fast violent reaction and the result is an EXPLOSION! However, this explosion is perfectly timed and further controlled by another valve in the rear of the beetle.

All this takes place in just 2 milliseconds and this allows some beetles to fire as many as 500 pulses a second like a machine gun! Hot boiling noxious gas ejects from the insect at a temperature of 100 °C (212 °F) and at a velocity of 20 metres (65 ft) per second into its predators. The chambers are boxing glove shaped and this unique shape allows them to pinch the first valve close so that no more fuel

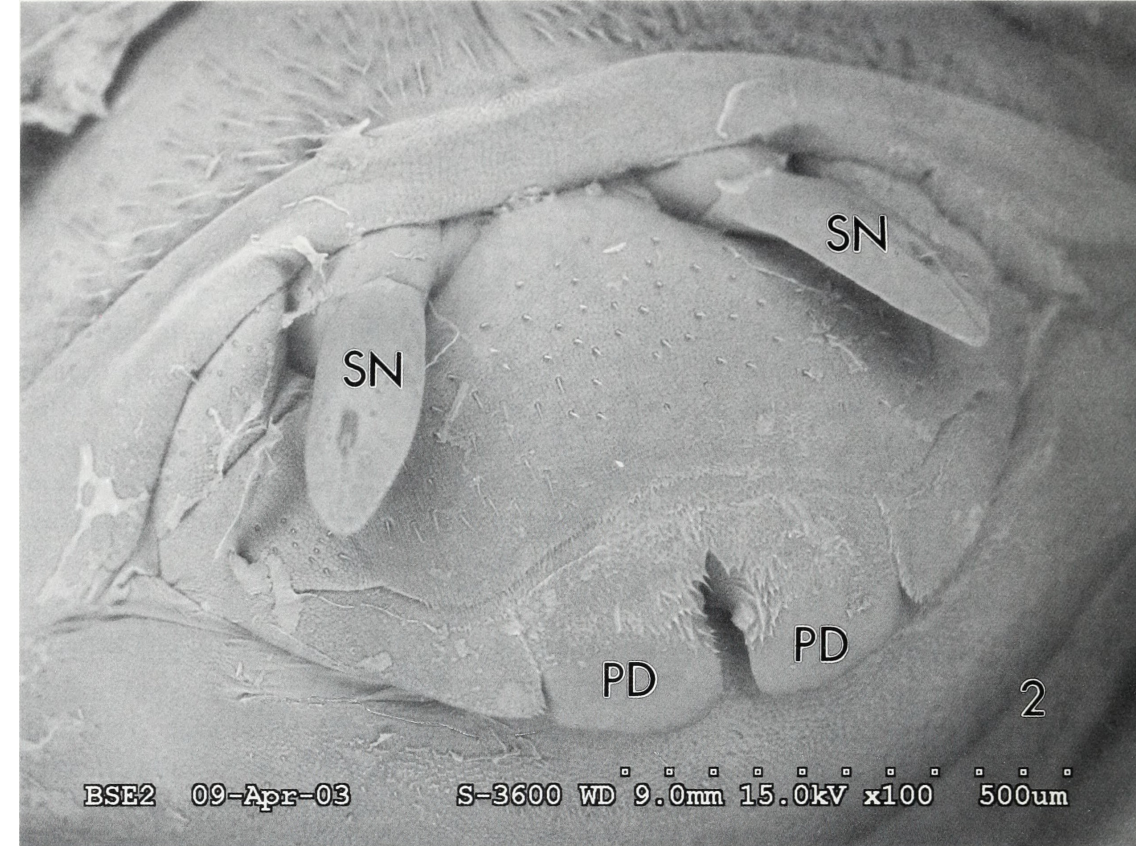
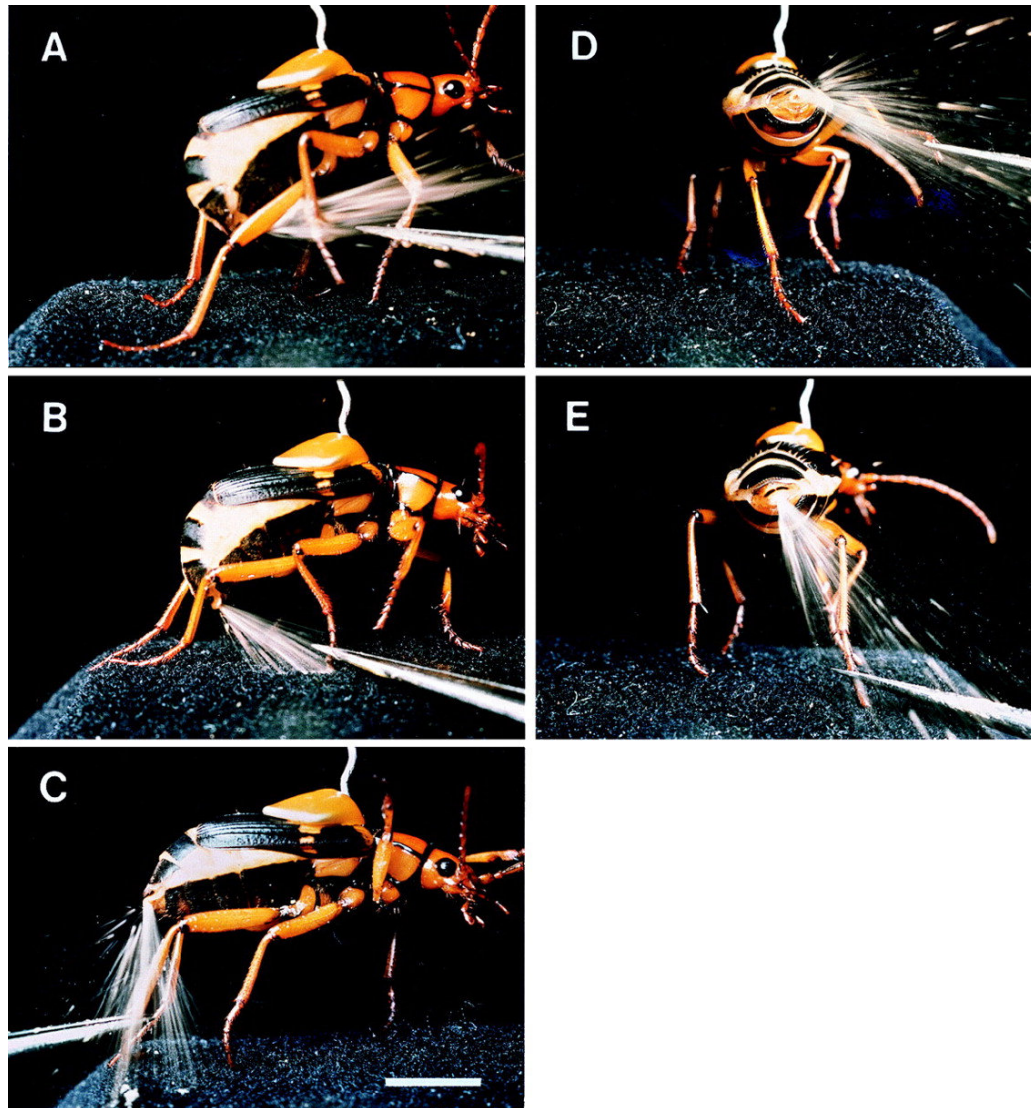
### **Bombardier Beetle**





enters in until the explosive mixture is released. The distance of the blast is an incredible 200 times the length of the combustion chamber. The chamber is only a mere 1 mm long but the blast reaches up to 20 cm deterring any predator usually frogs, spiders or ants from trying eat the beetle.

Not only so but the beetles have the ability to accurately direct the blast in any direction much like the turret of a tank but in a far more versatile way. It can direct the blast even forwards from its rear



towards its head, something even a battle tank cannot do.

Added to this there is the sensory mechanism which alerts the beetle to a predator approaching but also the direction in which to fire its rocket blast. Added further is the genetic code that has all the information passed down each generation of beetle to create this biological defence system when they are formed in their eggs.

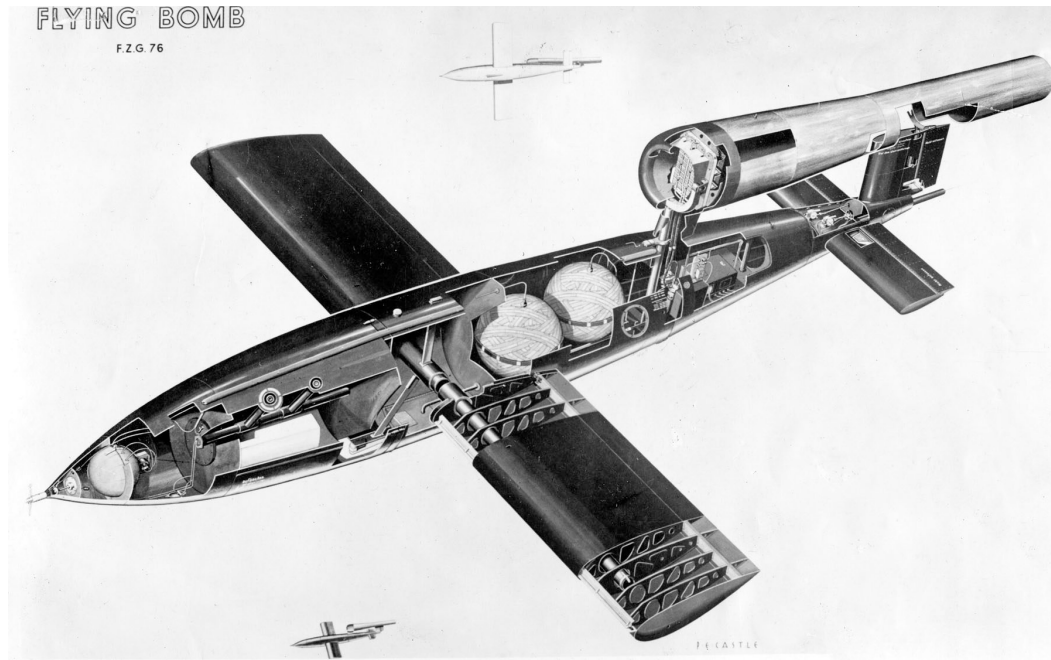
The system is similar to the pulse combustion technique the Germans used in their V-1 Doodlebugs or flying "buzz" bombs during World War 2.

There is still much research being conducted into these beetles but enough is understood to ask the question, how can such a creature even evolve by mere chance and natural selection. Explosive chemicals, inhibitors, enzymes, glands, combustion tubes, a sensory



## FLYING BOMB

F.Z.G. 76



communication system which alerts the beetle to its predators, muscles to direct the combustion tubes and reflex nervous systems all had to be present and work the first time otherwise the beetle cannot defend itself or in the process blew itself up trying to evolve.

According to those who think up ridiculous theories how all of this came into being without God over millions of years, only reveal that they are deliberately rebelling what they know to be true.

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:.”  
(Romans 1:20)





View of modern Nazareth

